



SAFETY MEMO

To: Silviculture Contractors, Harvesting Contractors, PG Woodlands
Date: May 12, 2006
Copy To: From: PG Woodlands Safety Committee
Location: CAC office
Subject: **SAFETY HAZARD ALERT** File:

SAFETY HAZARD ALERT

On May 3, 2006, a planting contractor working in the Mt. Mackenzie operating area had a Cougar encounter.

A cougar that was reported to be exhibiting predatory behavior followed a planter. The animal was spotted by another adjacent planter, and was scared off. The contractor's supervisor moved the planters out to the area and told the Canfor Silviculture Forester the next morning of the incident. This situation has never presented itself prior to this, and encounters are considered very rare, however, there is an obvious possibility of this occurring again with the possibility of injury.

All Silviculture Contractors and Canfor Field staff are trained in the event of contact with wildlife, specifically bears. The behavior of a cougar is more unpredictable and proper preventative instructions were not readily available or known.

- All contractors and Canfor field staff must review this hazard, and forward to all employees working in the field.
- All Silviculture Contractors are advised to implement precautionary measures immediately.

The following precautionary measures should be considered to avoid cougar encounters:

1. Work in groups; consider carrying a walking stick or shovel, and pepper spray.
2. Make noise to alert cougars of your presence.
3. Cougars are considered opportunistic hunters. If taking pets (dogs) to the field, do not allow them to roam freely.
4. Do not leave attractants such as garbage/food on the worksite. Clean up when you leave.
5. Avoid areas where carcasses have been left and be aware that cougars often cover their kill with forest debris.
6. Many Canfor operating areas overlap range tenure (specifically: Pelican, Mt.Mackenzie, Gregg, Chilako, Narcosli, England/Wansa). When working in these areas with cattle grazing nearby, take extra precautions.

If you see a cougar:

1. Never approach cougars and always leave plenty of room for them to easily escape.
2. Face the cougar and slowly back away, DO NOT run or play dead.
3. Make your self appear larger by raising your arms or hold an object above your head.

If a cougar is aggressive:

1. Actions such as shouting, waving a stick, or throwing rocks may help to prevent an attack; appear as though you are another predator and not prey.
2. If a cougar attacks, fight back. Use whatever is at hand to defend yourself.

These recommendations were taken from an Alberta Community Development, Kananaskis Country "Living with Cougars" brochure

Prince George Woodlands Safety Committee